

April 25, 1956

Professor H. Kikkawa
Genetics Laboratory
Faculty of Medicine
Osaka, Japan

Dear Professor Kikkawa:

Mr. Tetsuo Iino (who is a student in this laboratory [and one of the best!]) has called my attention to a brief notice by Hirota and yourself on the ~~"Disappearance of F in K-12 strain of E. coli"~~ "Disappearance of F in K-12 strain of E. coli" under the influence of Co^{++} .

Another student, Alan Richter has endeavoured to repeat the reported experiment, but had a negative result on the first trial. Before he spends any further effort on the confirmation, I would like to ask you the favor of advising us concerning the experimental details, if any, which are not brought out in the brief notice. We are naturally interested in any method which would facilitate the construction of new stocks in regard to their F character, and I appreciate of course that the notice hardly gave an opportunity for a detailed account. In assaying the reproducibility of your informal report, we would be particularly interested to know whether the effect can be easily repeated on strain Y-40, and on other strains; what variability there may be in the fraction of F- progeny, as well as any experimental details that might be helpful to us. We are concerned, for example, whether there is any appreciable killing of the treated cells: Richter was rather surprised not to observe any under his conditions, and this may have some bearing on his initial failure.

I have been most pleased to learn of your interest in these matters.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics